

We claim:

1. A network load testing system comprising:

an addressable named list means to enable the generation of substantially random
5 and unique network transaction instances simulative of real network traffic patterns,
addressing means operable to address the named list means, and
generating means, operable to communicate with the addressing means, for
generating the substantially random and unique network transaction instances simulative
of real network traffic patterns.

10 2. A network load testing system comprising:

means to enable the generation of substantially random and unique attributes to
vary a population of synthetic user attributes.

3. The network load testing system of claim 2 wherein:

the synthetic user attributes include any of URLs, hosts, security levels,
15 authentication, ports, and headers.

4. A network load testing system according to claim 1, further comprising:

means to enable the generation of substantially unique but substantially
predictable synthetic user attributes for introducing variation into ones of a series of
instances.

20 5. A network load testing system accordingly to claim 1, further comprising:

means for generating network transaction instances in accordance with a
distribution that is substantially random but representative of realistic population loads.

6. A network load testing system comprising:

means for generating synthetic transaction instances, simulative of the network
25 load presented by real users, in accordance with a test plan containing multiple
population classes, and wherein:

each of the population classes contains attributes that describe the behavior of
each instance generated in association with the group.

7. A network load testing system according to claim 6 further comprising:

30 a network testing resource application for generating, based on the test plan and
the attributes contained in the population classes therein, a series of instances and a
selected network protocol representative of an actual load.